



PARISH COUNCIL

Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Meeting by Zoom at 7.30pm.

**PRESENT** Cllr. J Britt Chairman presiding.  
Cllrs. M Cockett, D Garland, K Hammond, M Lowe, N Osborne, A Ratcliffe & A Walmsley.  
J Bate (RFO) L Westcott (Clerk)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** M McFarlane and Cllr. M Ballard

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON THE AGENDA**

No disclosures or confidential items on the agenda.

**3. RFO REPORT – Please see attached document for full report**

**a. Audit 2021**

The internal Audit will be undertaken on May 20<sup>th</sup> followed by the external audit whereby the review of the submitted audit will result in the completion of the AGAR part 3 document which forms the reporting requirements for the Parish. The accounts will be reported as accruals based.

**b. Bank Changes**

In order to open the new Unity online bank account, the switch service requires the closure of the NatWest savings account and transfer of the current account. The signatories listing will be reviewed and amended; Unity have stated that they will require at least two of the current signatories to come over as part of the Switch. Unity offer a bulk payment service for regular payees/payments which could be utilised subject to the necessary levels of parish council control and reporting required.

**c. Ground Maintenance**

The Ground Maintenance contract quote from S Waring for 2021 showed a reduction of £465, the Clerk confirmed (post meeting) a figure for the cemetery was transposed incorrectly, hence the discrepancy.

**4. UPDATE ON SECTION 106 & CIL MONIES**

Cllr. J Britt recommended that Cllr. D Garland be a signatory on the new bank account to enable tracking of the CIL money. Cllr. D Garland reported that £12,000 CIL money from MHS Homes (second phase of land West of Old Goods Yard) is due to be paid next month.

**5. UPDATE ON THE SALE OF THE STRIP OF LAND AT WILLIAM PITT FIELD**

Cllr. J Britt reported that a draft contract has been received and circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr. N Osborne requested more detail of the full payment schedule, as details of the second payment were not clear. Cllr. A Walmsley sought clarification regarding surface water attenuation on the William Pitt Field. Cllr. M Lowe stated that we need to ensure that the land be returned to its original state after the works are complete.

**ACTION** Cllr. J Britt to email Thorneloe to raise the above matters.

**6. PROJECTS UPDATE**

**a) Purchase of 1A High Street Office**

Cllr. J Britt reported that he has been in regular contact with both the Estate Agent and Solicitors to progress the sale. Cllrs. J Britt and N Osborne will visit the property on 19<sup>th</sup> March with L Westcott. The seller has agreed that LPC can have limited access to the building prior to the completion date in order to set things up.

**b) Toilets**

No update

**c) Maidstone Road Car Park**

Cllr. D Garland reported that the white lining has not all been completed due to 5 cars being parked in the car park (despite the car park closed sign). It was agreed to ask the contractors to not come back at a specific time, but to complete the lines when they were passing for another job.

**ACTION** Cllr. D Garland to remove road cones, signs have already been removed.

**ACTION** Cllr. D Garland to get keys for the lock up from Paul Scrivens (former Cllr.).

**d) Nursery School**

Cllr. A Ratcliffe reported that he had received two quotes for completion of a bat survey. Cllr. A Ratcliffe to recommend using Native Ecology at LPC meeting.

**e) Ham Lane Footpath**

Prior to meeting Cllr. M Ballard reported via email that the new fences have been installed too close to the new footpath. It had been agreed during site meetings with KCC that the fence would be placed one foot (30cm) away from either side of the new path. KCC have not upheld this agreement and would not change the line of the fence during the works when the mistake was pointed out. Cllr. M Ballard has drafted an email to send to KCC. All agreed that KCC will be unlikely to change the fence now, but the clerk should write to them expressing LPCs disappointment.

**ACTION** L Westcott to amend Cllr. M Ballards draft email and send to Cllr. A Ratcliffe to review prior to sending to KCC.

Cllr. J Britt reported that residents of the Russells have requested that no one writes to their solicitors as this costs them money. They are happy to discuss the path themselves with LPC. Cllr. J Britt recommends that LPC and the residents have a meeting once the nesting season is over. Cllr. D Garland reported that he has spoken to Golding Homes and they are also amenable to discussions.

**ACTION** Cllr. J Britt to liaise with residents on our proposed way forward and recommend this action at LPC.

**f) Cross Maintenance**

i. A quote has not been received for the gate, but a quote for the fence and painting has come in at £1000, this is S106 money from The Paddocks.

ii. An interpretation board is also required, the content will be provided by the Thornes.

**ACTION** Cllr. A Walmsley to speak to the Thornes.

Cllr. J Britt reported that Bretts Aggregates could provide the chalk for the cross, Cllr. N Osborne stated that it shouldn't need new chalk but will need a clean that Steve Waring could carry out. All agreed the work should be completed for the centenary in 2022.

**g) Play Areas**

i. Cllr. M Lowe reported that all outdoor gym equipment has been installed but cannot be used until 29<sup>th</sup> March when restrictions are lifted. The fencing surrounding the equipment at the William Pitt Field keeps getting pulled down. Cllr. M Lowe has checked this daily and has ordered Heras fencing to replace the original fencing at a cost of over £500. All agreed that this is a large sum of money to pay for ten days use of fencing.

**ACTION** Cllr. M Lowe to cancel Heras fencing order.

ii. Cllr. N Osborne reported that the residents at Forge House, Old Ashford Road would like to donate a tree house from their garden to LPC.

**ACTION** Cllr. M Lowe to view equipment and to decide where it can be placed.

**ACTION** Cllr. N Osborne to find temporary storage for the equipment if required.

- iii. Cllr. M Lowe reported that the basketball backboard and hoop needs fitting. The skateboard ramp has been ordered.

**ACTION** Cllr. M Lowe to provide a summary of money spent from the S106.

#### 5. LANDSCAPE & VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

- a) A quote has been received for the refurbishment of the notice boards at £694. This was recommended to be agreed.
- b) Russ Young has not returned M McFarlane's email regarding the memorial bench at the William Pitt Field.

#### 6. NEW AND REPLACEMENT PLANTERS UPDATE

Cllr. J Britt reported that a quote has been received for new village signposts which was very high.

**ACTION** Cllr D Garland to contact Peter Goodwin to discuss alternative options.

Cllr. D Garland reported that all three planters on the A20 have been replaced. The planter on Old Ashford Road is starting to rot, a quote of £440 has been received. Two planters were delivered yesterday to Malthouse Close and the residents have already planted these. The social club have requested a planter outside, it was agreed LPC could pay half covered by a grant request with the other half from the social club.

**ACTION** Cllr. D Garland to provide a summary of money spent on the planters and include what has already been agreed to be spent.

Cllr. D Garland reported that there is ivy growing on the trees at the Faversham Road junction which will cause them harm. As we are in nesting season the ivy cannot be removed but there maybe other methods to try.

**ACTION** L Westcott to contact Chris Hill to arrange a meeting with Cllr. D Garland to discuss options and get quotes.

#### 7. CCTV MAINTENANCE REPORT & PROPOSED UPGRADE

Cllr. A Walmsley reported that eight new CCTV cameras have been installed and three of these have number plate recognition. It was agreed that these will be reviewed in a month to assess if they are in the best locations. The project went £100 over the agreed budget. The invoice is with J Bate to be paid from this year's budget.

#### 8. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Letter received from the Air Ambulance asking for donations. Cllr. A Ratcliffe suggested sending them a grant form to complete.

**ACTION** L Westcott to check with M McFarlane and send a grant form.

The planning application refused by MBC at Lenham Sandpit is going to appeal. LPC objected due to the new policy in the neighbourhood plan. Paul McCreery has drafted a letter detailing why LPC have changed their decision to object when previously LPC had agreed to a similar application.

**ACTION** Cllr. J Britt to review Paul McCreery's letter and L Westcott will send it on LPC headed paper to the Planning Inspectorate.

The meeting closed at 21:45